AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

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Historical & Philosophical Society of Ohio

BIBLE SOCIETY MANUAL:

OR

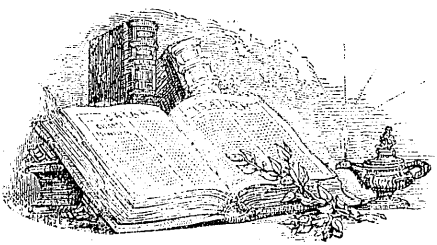
Brief View of the History and Operations

OF THE

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY,

AND OF

The Bible Cause in general.



NEW YORK:

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY,

INSTITUTED IN THE YEAR MDCCCXVI.

1852.

A63

OFFICERS OF THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY.

PRESIDENT.
HON. THEODORE FRELINGHUYSEN, LL.D., New Jersey.

SECRETARIES.
REV. JOHN C. BRIGHAM, D.D.
" JOSEPH HOLDICH, D.D.

SPECIAL SECRETARY.
REV. JOSEPH C. STILES.

TREASURER.
WILLIAM WHITLOCK, JUN., ESQ.

GENERAL AGENT AND ASSISTANT TREASURER.
JOSEPH HYDE, ESQ.

DIRECTIONS AS TO CORRESPONDENCE.

Pecuniary remittances, letters relating to the accounts of Auxiliaries, *orders* for Bibles and Testaments, and those respecting the transmission of the Annual Report and Bible Society Record, should be directed to JOSEPH HYDE, Esq., General Agent and Assistant Treasurer, Bible House, No. 115 Nassau Street, New York.

Letters relating to Travelling Agencies, to Delegations for Auxiliary Anniversaries, and inquiries as to the mode of raising funds, requests for *donations* of books, inquiries as to the general policy of the Society, notices of new Auxiliaries formed, reports of those already recognised, should be directed as follows:—

"*Secretaries of American Bible Society,*
Bible House, 115 Nassau Street, New York."

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These societies were necessarily very feeble at first, and obliged, from their scattered condition, to labour under great disadvantages. To give completeness and efficiency to the Bible effort throughout the country, a central organization was called for. The subject was discussed, in various places, by the friends of the Cause, both publicly and privately, urged on much by the late Samuel J. Mills, until the year 1815, when a plan for a national Bible society was formally proposed by the society then in existence in New Jersey, at the head of which stood the Hon. Elias Boudinot, of Burlington. Notice was given of a convention to be held in the city of New York for the consideration of this plan; and on the second Wednesday of May, 1816, the friends of the Cause met, according to appointment, in the lecture room of the Dutch Reformed church in Garden Street. Joshua M. Wallace, Esq., of New Jersey, was chosen president of the convention, and the Rev. Drs. J. B. Romeyn and Lyman Beecher were appointed secretaries. Sixty delegates were present as the representatives of twenty-eight local societies, and took part in the proceedings of the meeting.

Its Constitution.

A constitution was adopted with great unanimity, and of the most catholic character, a copy of which will be found in all the Annual Reports. A very able address, drawn up by the Rev. Dr. John M. Mason, was sent forth with the constitution. We give a brief extract, showing the spirit which prevailed. After stating the simple, grand object in view, and the happy results anticipated, the convention add:

"Under such impressions, and with such views, fathers, brethren, fellow citizens, the American Bible Society has been formed. Local feelings, party prejudice, sectarian jealousies, are excluded by its very nature. Its members

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are leagued in that, and in that alone, which calls up every hallowed, and puts down every unhallowed principle—the dissemination of the Scriptures in the received versions where they exist, and in the most faithful where they may be required. In such a work, whatever is dignified, kind, venerable, true, has ample scope, while sectarian littleness and rivalries can find no avenue of admission."

Its Government.

This is intrusted by the constitution to a Board of thirty-six Managers, all laymen, one fourth of whom go out of office each year, but are re-eligible. They hold a stated meeting on the first Thursday of every month for the transaction of business. Several standing committees are appointed by this body to mature business, namely, one for finance and the preparation of books, one to attend to their distribution, and one to have charge of travelling agencies. These committees meet once or twice each month, and lay their various recommendations before the Board on the *first Thursday*. In this Board are found those connected with the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian, the Dutch Reformed, the Methodist Episcopal, the Baptist, the Congregational, and the Society of Friends. Laymen who are directors for life by payment of $150, and ministers who are life members by payment of $30, are authorized to attend the meetings of the Board, and the officers of all Auxiliaries have the same privilege at the meetings of the Society. The Institution, therefore, must of necessity be managed according to the will of its constituents, and cannot be made an instrument to their injury.

Its Property.

It has long been a settled principle of this Institution, that it will keep no invested permanent funds, but spend all its income, as Divine Providence furnishes it, in scattering the Sacred Word. But while it lays up no funds for profit's sake, it has necessarily some property in stereotype plates, machinery for printing and binding, and in a house for manufacturing purposes, offices, &c. The present *House* is found wholly inadequate to the business of the Society, and one of greater dimensions is in course of erection. As it is not yet completed, we can only give an outline of what it is to be, and how obtained, as taken from the last Report:—

"In April last, the Board appointed a special committee to inquire for a suitable site for a new and more commodious House. This committee at once entered on the duty assigned them. Their attention at first was directed mostly to the lower sections of the City. But as a number of contiguous lots were required for the Society's accommodation, and lots too where surrounding buildings would not obstruct light, and not emit smoke and vapour to injure books when in process of manufacture, it was found impossible to obtain the requisite lots in this part of the City, without an expense which could not be borne. Attention was then directed, as a matter of necessity, to other parts of the City. Here the finger of Providence seemed at once visible. A vacant plot of ground was brought to notice between Third and Fourth Avenues, and Eighth and Ninth Streets, which appeared at first view desirable, and which every subsequent examination has rendered still more so. The plot contains between eleven and twelve City lots, has an open street on all sides, with a

circumference of 706 feet, affording an abundance of light and of air, and with little or no exposure to extraneous fires.

"The question will necessarily arise with many, Whence are to be obtained the *funds* for so large an edifice? To this question the Board would cheerfully and freely respond. It should be remembered that the first House of the Society, built in 1822, fifty feet in front by one hundred deep, was all paid for (about $22,500) by citizens of New York, being special gifts for that object. The printing and binding establishment adjoining, and nearly of the same dimensions and cost, was paid for in part by special subscription, but mostly by funds temporarily borrowed. By the rise of property, the present value of the first House of 1822 is not only more than its cost, but more than the cost including that of the printing and binding department; and the value of the whole establishment is now more than double what was originally paid for it. Thus it will be seen, that the present buildings of the Society have not swallowed up the yearly contributions of members and friends, as some have affirmed, but rather, that these members (who in common are the owners) have been put in possession of the buildings, now greatly enhanced in value, without cost to any, save a few generous benefactors in New York City.

"As to the manner of paying for the new House, the whole may be learned by a short extract from a Circular which the Board are about to put into the hands of some 150 or 200 of the present City residents.

"After describing the limited accommodations of the present House, and the favourable grounds secured for a new one, the Circular adds:—

"'But while a desirable site is obtained, a House is not yet erected, and means for its erection are secured only in part; no farther than what may be realized from the sale of the present establishment. How shall the additional funds required be obtained? This is a grave question; one which has caused the Board much deliberation, and led them to seek the wisest counsel among the friends of the Institution. The result of all has been, a deep conviction that they are called upon to go forward and use conscientiously the moneys at command, and then ask the benevolent in New York to come and unite in furnishing additional aid. They are encouraged to this course by looking to the history of the first House of the Society, built in 1822. This was all paid for cheerfully by our citizen fathers, most of whom have now ceased from their labours. *They* felt that it would be unwise to invite the residents of other cities, and those in the country, to take part in putting up a Bible House *here*, though designed for the whole country. They desired that it should be a present from this great metropolis to the nation, so that all remittances, large and small, from abroad, might go directly towards publishing and circulating the Holy Scriptures. It is believed that many of our present citizens, on understanding the case, will be desirous that the same policy of 1822 may still be adhered to, by those who live to see now the need of another and an enlarged building.

"'For the purpose of ascertaining who and how many entertain such views, the Managers have appointed a Committee to see various individuals, and learn how far they are disposed to lend their aid in preparing the House so urgently demanded.'

"What success the Board are to meet with in this effort to collect funds, remains to be seen. It can hardly be doubted, however, that a generous sum

will be received. But if not, other measures will be adopted, and that without touching the ordinary contributions of the auxiliaries and friends, either in the city or country. It is the design of the Board to erect a House of such dimensions, that some portion of it can, for a time, be rented, so as not only to pay interest on a temporary loan, but furnish a sinking fund which shall ere long pay the loan itself. The whole House will then be for the exclusive use of the Society; and should its growth continue, as in the past, all will be required at no distant period, in preparing and sending forth the precious Word to the accumulating millions of our own and other accessible lands. The aim and ardent desire of the Board is to obtain present subscriptions for the House, so as to leave no more debt than can be removed by rents before the whole room is wanted for the Society's own use."

Its Presidents.

The *first President* of the Society was the *Hon. Elias Boudinot*, of New Jersey. He was elected to that office on the 11th of May, 1816, and continued to discharge its duties until the time of his death, which occurred on the 24th of October, 1821. The *second President* of the Society was the *Hon. John Jay*, of New York. He was chosen to this office soon after the death of the Hon. Mr. Boudinot, and continued in it until the year 1828, when, on account of his growing infirmities, he deemed it his duty to resign. The *third President* of the Society was the *Hon. Richard Varrick*, also of New York. He was called to this post soon after the resignation of Mr. Jay, and presided over the Society until the time of his death, which occurred in the year 1832. The *fourth President* of the Society was the *Hon. John Cotton Smith*, of Connecticut. He was called to this position in the spring of 1832, and discharged the duties growing out of it for a period of fifteen years, until the time of his death, which occurred on the 7th of December, 1845, he having attained the 81st year of his age. The *fifth President* of the Society is the one who now holds this important office—the *Hon. Theodore Frelinghuysen*, of New Jersey, to which he was called soon after the death of the Hon. Mr. Smith.

Its Past Usefulness.

The Society, since its organization, has printed and put into circulation an aggregate of 8,288,982 Bibles and Testaments. In addition to this, it has made pecuniary grants to aid in the publication of the Scriptures at various missionary stations in foreign lands, to the amount of nearly $400,000.

It has supplied several thousand seamen with the Word of Life. It has sent the Scriptures, by seamen, into every part of the world. It has furnished them to criminals in our jails and penitentiaries: placed them in all the rooms of many of our hotels, and at many of our railroad station houses; and bestowed them liberally upon the inmates of our various humane institutions throughout the country. It has caused this inestimable Book to be carried to hundreds of thousands of families, who otherwise would no doubt have lived and died without its consolations and its light. It has placed it in the habitations of the poor; given it to the aged and to the young; and scattered it every where with liberality among the sons and daughters of affliction and sorrow. It has opened Depositories for the Bible in every part of the land, and invited all to come to them and to partake of the bread and of the water of life, if needs be, "without money and without price."

Its Annual Receipts since its Organization.

1st	Year,	1816-17	$ 37,779 35	19th	Year,	1834-35	$ 98,306 29
2d	"	1817-18	36,561 30	20th	"	1835-36	101,771 48
3d	"	1818-19	53,223 94	21st	"	1836-37	83,259 79
4th	"	1819-20	41,361 97	22d	"	1837-38	79,515 24
5th	"	1820-21	47,009 20	23d	"	1838-39	91,904 57
6th	"	1821-22	40,682 34	24th	"	1839-40	94,880 24
7th	"	1822-23	52,021 75	25th	"	1840-41	116,485 05
8th	"	1823-24	42,416 95	26th	"	1841-42	132,637 08
9th	"	1824-25	44,833 08	27th	"	1842-43	124,728 77
10th	"	1825-26	53,630 85	28th	"	1843-44	153,678 05
11th	"	1826-27	60,194 13	29th	"	1844-45	159,738 68
12th	"	1827-28	75,879 93	30th	"	1845-46	196,182 48
13th	"	1828-29	101,426 72	31st	"	1846-47	203,494 63
14th	"	1829-30	143,449 81	32d	"	1847-48	251,804 68
15th	"	1830-31	116,900 74	33d	"	1848-49	236,428 94
16th	"	1831-32	86,875 18	34th	"	1849-50	281,459 59
17th	"	1832-33	83,556 03	35th	"	1850-51	276,882 53
18th	"	1833-34	86,537 63	36th	"	1851-52	308,744 81

Its Annual Issues since its Organization.

Year.	Bibles.	Tests.	Total.	Year.	Bibles.	Tests.	Total.
1	6,410	——	6,410	19	47,709	75,527	123,236
2	17,594	——	17,594	20	65,974	155,720	221,694
3	23,870	7,248	31,118	21	51,354	154,886	206,240
4	26,800	14,713	41,513	22	45,083	113,215	158,298
5	26,772	16,474	43,246	23	45,333	89,604	134,937
6	28,910	24,560	53,470	24	54,227	103,034	157,261
7	28,448	26,357	54,805	25	64,304	87,898	152,202
8	31,590	28,849	60,439	26	101,416	155,650	257,066
9	30,094	33,757	63,851	27	82,912	133,693	216,605
10	31,154	35,980	67,134	28	114,766	199,816	314,582
11	35,876	35,745	71,621	29	145,970	283,122	429,092
12	75,734	58,873	134,607	30	161,974	321,899	483,873
13	91,248	108,874	200,122	31	209,416	418,348	627,764
14	130,254	108,329	238,583	32	232,272	422,794	655,066
15	171,972	70,211	242,183	33	205,307	359,419	564,726
16	54,813	60,959	115,892	34	205,037	428,358	633,395
17	36,941	54,227	91,168	35	209,821	382,611	592,432
18	34,083	76,749	110,832	36	221,450	444,565	666,015

Its Auxiliaries.

The Managers of the American Bible Society could do but little directly towards supplying our country with the Scriptures. They have, therefore, organized Auxiliary Societies in every State, as far as practicable. They now

extend from Maine to California and Oregon, and are about 1,400 in number, with some 2,400 minor Branches. These local Auxiliary Societies are sometimes confined to a city or village, sometimes extend over a State, but generally are of the dimensions of a county. They have a President, one or more Vice Presidents, a Secretary, Treasurer, and an Executive Committee of five or seven. In becoming Auxiliary, they make two pledges, First, that they will "circulate the Scriptures without note or comment;" Secondly, that "when the wants of their own field are supplied, they will pay over their surplus funds to the Parent Society, to supply the destitute in other places." The first of these provisions, it will be seen, secures the catholicity of the Auxiliary; and the second confines each to its own field of labour, while it furnishes the Parent Institution with the means of extending general operations as the wants of the world are brought to notice.

These Auxiliary Societies may sometimes become remiss in duty for a year or two; but furnish, on the whole, the best system yet devised for keeping up a home supply, and for raising free contributions. Examination will show, that those counties which have, for a series of years, kept up local Auxiliaries, have done by far the most for the general cause.

The mode of forming these Auxiliaries will be learned from the *form* of constitution given on the cover.

Its Agents.

The number of Agents employed is now about thirty, being less than one to a State. Their compensation varies according to their different circumstances and importance to the Cause. The aim is never to go beyond (usually much short of) what is received by pastors in the same general locality, though their labours are very arduous, and attended with many deprivations and self-denials, such as an almost continued absence from their families.

The object of these Agents is to form new and revive existing Auxiliaries, to collect funds, urge the procuring and distribution of books, obtain life-member and directorships, and in all proper ways to enlist the community in behalf of the Bible Cause.

Though these agents belong to four or five different denominations, there has seldom ever a complaint been made of their departure, while in service, from the following catholic ground marked out in their instructions:—

"While engaged in your agency, you will frequently be called to preach, or make addresses on the Sabbath, and sometimes perhaps on common topics, as well as on your special business. In all cases, it is expected that you will be careful to avoid any of the peculiarities of denomination, and dwell on those great essential truths of religion in which all the evangelical unite. The Bible Cause has no sectarian character, and its Agents should give it none, either by their public speaking or conversation. All metaphysical, sectional, ecclesiastical, or political topics, which divide the opinions even of many good men, are to be avoided by those, whose great business is, to circulate the Word of God as it was received from heaven. Try to produce harmony, forbearance, and kindness among different denominations, by treating all who have the Christian spirit as members of the same great family, and expectants of the same inheritance in their Father's house on high. You cannot feel too deeply the importance of your work, and the necessity of looking continually to the Great Author

of the Bible for wisdom and strength. Without his aid you will do little to any valuable purpose; with his grace assisting, you can do all things well. Cherish habitually a modest, prudent, Christian spirit, which, with an entire devotedness to the business of your agency, will be the best recommendation both of yourself and your object, among all the good people whom you may visit."

It should be added, too, as an honour to their office and to religion, that while these agents have, for more than thirty years, been in the constant practice of collecting funds and remitting them to the Parent Board, they have never, in a single instance, failed to render a most satisfactory account of every dollar intrusted to their care.

Privileges of Life Members and Directors.

Each Life Member of this Society (who has paid $30) shall be allowed to receive from the Depository annually, for distribution, Bibles and Testaments to the value of *one dollar;* and each Life Director (who has paid $150) shall be allowed to receive annually Bibles and Testaments to the value of *two dollars and a half*, for the same purpose. An account is kept of this class of issues in a separate book, and the amount of such issues presented in the Annual Report.

The motive which led to the adoption of such a measure is seen in the following extract from the twenty-sixth Annual Report:—

"The above regulation was adopted from a conviction that there are a multitude of individuals in the community—orphans, apprentices, servants, boatmen, stage-drivers, and the like—who have no Bibles, and but few religious privileges, and who might, to some extent, be supplied by the method now proposed; for who will be so likely to scatter the Sacred Volume among the needy, as those who have shown such regard for that Volume as to make themselves members and directors of the Institution which furnishes it for distribution?"

The reader will learn from what is given above, that the object of the Board was a benevolent, *charitable* one, and that the books to be drawn out were designed to be usually the plain, cheap kind, suitable for gratuitous distribution among the persons specified. We mention this, as, through a misapprehension of the object, the more expensive sorts have occasionally been sent for, contrary to the original design. If the true design of the Board is complied with, the effect will be, to put the Sacred Volume into the hands of many who greatly need, and would not otherwise receive it. But if expensive books are drawn out and presented from friendship to those who are not in want, so much is taken from the ability of the Society to furnish the cheaper sort to the destitute, who are calling for it with increasing importunity.

N. B.—The above books can be issued only for the year current, not *past* years. They can be obtained by calling or sending for them annually at the Society's House, or can be obtained through a local Auxiliary, provided said Auxiliary will furnish us *semi-annually* (or oftener, if it orders books) with the names of those who have received their books for the year. The Auxiliary can then be credited for the books thus issued for us.

Principles of the Society respecting the Prices of Books.

On the above topic, an important report was submitted to the Board in February, 1852, by a committee, and adopted. A few extracts are here furnished:—

"This Society is, by its Constitution, shut up to a line of action which allows of no profit whatever on sales. The IIId Article of the Constitution reads thus:

"'All Bible societies shall be allowed to purchase, at cost, from this Society, Bibles for distribution within their own districts.'

"The IXth Article provides thus:

"'Each member of the Society shall be entitled, under the direction of the Board of Managers, to purchase Bibles and Testaments at the Society's prices, which shall be as low as possible.'

"Here is an express rule for selling books to Bible societies and members, at the 'cost price,' 'as low as possible.'

"As the term *cost* would allow payment for stereotype plates, as well as for printing and binding, an additional charge of five per cent. was for a time made to cover the expense of said plates; but now, for many years, this item has been thrown out, and the prices fixed simply at the cost of paper, printing, and binding.

"Some of the plainer kinds of books, which go more generally to the poor, are sold for less than cost; while some of the better varieties are sold for a fraction more. On the whole issue of the year, nothing is gained; but rather a loss sustained to the extent of the wear of the stereotype plates.

"Such is the course of the Society in preparing books, and fixing the terms of sale. The course was obviously designed to be a benevolent one, to make and keep the blessed Bible at the lowest price, so that all, if possible, might receive it.

"But how were these books to be sold and distributed in a benevolent way, without regard to profit? It will be seen by those articles of the Constitution above cited, that they were to be sold not only at cost, but to Bible societies and to members. No provision was made for selling to those not related to the Society—those who might wish to purchase and resell for *gain*. The first movement of the Society, therefore, was to form local auxiliaries, to furnish them books without profit, and gratuitously when needful, and urge them, as the first duty, to look up the *destitute* and supply *them*. During the first year, more than eighty of these local societies became auxiliary; and the number has since increased to nearly 1,400. The great mass of the books distributed, indeed almost the whole, have gone through these channels, and gone to those who were most in need of them. It will be seen, therefore, that the mode of distribution proposed was as benevolent as that of fixing prices; the aim in both cases has been to furnish the Bible, with the least possible expense, to those who were in need of it.

"The Committee have inquired, What if a mercantile profit were added to the present prices of books; if some hundreds of agents and sub-agents were employed to go out *directly* and sell to the rich and the poor, to bookmerchants, and all who would purchase? Now, they have little doubt but that by such a

course there would be a greatly enlarged distribution of books, and, consequently, a great increase in the Treasurer's annual receipts.

"Even the profits contemplated on the books would add thousands to the annual income; and the direct receipts and disbursements for sustaining local distributers, (now confined mostly to the reports of the auxiliaries,) would add thousands more to the aggregate financial account of the Parent Society. But would this be proof that its *usefulness* had been thus increased? The answer to this inquiry would have to depend upon the condition of those who were the recipients of these issues, whether they were in need or not.

"It has been the glory of this Society hitherto, as already stated, that most of its books, of plain quality, have gone to the destitute; to such as the book-merchant does not reach. But change the system—go out and propose to sell to all who will buy, and there will be a large demand for, and large issues of, elegant books, called for by those in no urgent need, and who could be easily supplied without benevolent aid. It would follow, therefore, that the usefulness of the Society is not to be measured by the amount of its business, but by the benevolent character of its distributions.

"The Committee are of the opinion, furthermore, that a great moral loss would be experienced by these auxiliaries themselves, were they to be disbanded, and all distributions effected by the direct agency of the Parent Society. Many of these local societies have toiled on more than a third of a century, passing often over their respective fields, furnishing all who were in need, with the Word of Life, and closing the year with an animating report. The labour has been a blessing to those who performed it, as well as to those who were its objects. Even if distributers are henceforth, to some extent, to be *hired*, it is believed that they will be more wisely employed and directed by those auxiliaries near at hand, than by the Parent Board at a distance.

"The Committee come, therefore, unanimously to the conclusion, that the principles of the Society, laid down by the founders, as to the prices of books, and the mode of circulation, are wise and benevolent, and could not be changed without impairing the usefulness of the Institution. They believe that the highest good of those who compose these auxiliaries will be reached by holding on in their present course, keeping all the neglected within their limits, adults and children, supplied with the precious Word; and then, instead of expending much for costly books, paying over their surplus income to the general treasury, to supply our destitute new settlements, and the still more destitute in Papal, Mahommedan, and Pagan lands.

"For the sake of convenient reference, they beg leave to submit the following resolutions, furnishing, in condensed form, the substance of the above report:

"1. *Resolved*, That the Auxiliaries of this Society be requested to continue their present organization, making it more and more perfect, and their labours every year more systematic and thorough.

"2. *Resolved*, That in selling books, they be urgently requested to carry out the benevolent design of the Parent Society as to prices; furnishing them at the first cost when able, and in no case with an additional charge beyond the expense of transportation.

"3. *Resolved*, That in the work of exploration and supply, they be advised to have this done, as far as practicable, by the voluntary labour of those who compose the auxiliaries; that when hired distributers are required, they be

under the guidance and support of those local bodies, the Parent Board being called on for aid, (as in case of donations of books,) only when truly needful.

"4. *Resolved*, That those who apply for books to resell for profit, be informed that they cannot be obtained for that object; as it would be contrary to the whole system and spirit of the Society thus to furnish them.

"5. *Resolved*, That individuals who wish to purchase for the purpose of resale, without profit, to those who are in need, be directed to the local auxiliaries for a supply; and that they too, and all who purchase, be enjoined to observe the rules above indicated as to prices, that there be no grounds for a charge of speculation in the Society's books."

Principles of the Society respecting Grants to other Benevolent Societies.

It is a peculiarity of this Society, that the precious Book which it publishes, is needed and called for, more or less, by all institutions engaged in doing good to men, on the land or the water. To meet these wants in the best way, a Special Committee was appointed, some years since, to make inquiry as to plan. A plan was recommended, adopted, and published, the leading features of which are subjoined.—

"1. That the Auxiliaries be requested to place in the hands of the colporteurs of the ——— Society, upon the application of such colporteurs, Bibles and Testaments for distribution, as far as the Auxiliaries may think it necessary; and if to accomplish this the Auxiliaries should need the aid of the Parent Society, such aid will be cheerfully granted as soon as their wants shall be made known.

"2. That the books thus granted be sold, when practicable, for whole or part cost, and the avails returned to the American Bible Society, or used in purchasing other copies for distribution.

"3. In counties where Auxiliary Bible Societies are ready and willing to supply all the destitute within their limits, and are, by their own appointed labourers, actually engaged in this work, it is not expected that the colporteurs of the ——— Society will there find it needful to engage in the same work.

"4. When distributions of the Bible are made by the colporteurs of the ——— Society, it is not understood or expected that their distributions will be general, but confined to families which are found to be destitute.

"5. As it is not the design of the ——— Society to go into the work of Bible distribution but to the limited extent specified, and as the Bibles thus distributed are furnished gratuitously by Bible Societies, these facts should be clearly stated by agents and colporteurs, when soliciting funds in connection with statements about Bible destitution, lest an impression be made, that said funds go wholly or in part (as they never do) for the benefit of the Bible Society.

"6. As the funds of the Bible Society are furnished for the exclusive purpose of circulating the Scriptures without note or comment, and furnished in part by those who are not connected with the ——— Society, it is not considered proper that any portion of said funds should be used in sustaining colporteurs, who circulate other books with the Bible."

On reviewing the report referred to at a recent meeting, the following resolution was adopted, which, it will be seen, modifies the instructions there given in one point, namely, that of *paying back funds*:—

"*Resolved*, That grants of Bibles and Testaments, made to other benevolent societies for the supply of the destitute, can be sold by said societies, where there is ability to buy, and the proceeds used in purchasing other copies issued by the American Bible Society, an annual statement being furnished as to the manner in which said grants have been disposed of."

Principles of the Society in reference to Translations.

When the Society was organized, in 1816, it looked first to the supply of our own young, growing, destitute country. At the same time, it contemplated the distribution of the Scriptures extensively, ere long, in foreign lands. Within the last fifteen or twenty years, much has been thus accomplished in circulating them in the West Indies, in different parts of Spanish America and Brazil, in France, Russia, Greece, Turkey, Syria, India, at several points in China, at the Sandwich Islands, and among eight of the tribes of our aborigines. A portion of these Scriptures have been printed at the Society's House, and another portion by missionaries and others abroad, from funds furnished by the Bible Society.

As this Society is composed of many religious denominations, it was taken for granted by the Board generally, that no versions would ask for patronage unless they were of a catholic character, such as all the confederated parties could unite in using, as they used in common the English Bible.

It appeared, however, some years since, that one of these united bodies had taken a different view of the case, and thought themselves at liberty to take funds from the common treasury to publish versions which inculcated their own peculiar religious sentiments.

This led the Board, in 1836, to express their views on this subject by the following resolutions:—

"By the Constitution of the American Bible Society, its Managers are, in the circulating of the Holy Scriptures, restricted to such copies as are 'without note or comment;' and in the English language, to the 'version in common use.' The design of these restrictions clearly seems to have been, to simplify and mark out the duties of the Society, so that all religious denominations of which it is composed, might harmoniously unite in performing these duties.

"As the Managers are now called to aid extensively in circulating the Sacred Scriptures in languages other than the English, they deem it their duty, in conformity with the obvious spirit of their compact, to adopt the following resolutions, as the rule of their conduct, in making appropriations for the circulation of the Scriptures in all *foreign tongues*:—

"*Resolved*, That in appropriating money for translating, printing, or distributing the Sacred Scriptures in foreign languages, the Managers feel at liberty to encourage only such versions as conform in the principles of their translation to the common English version, at least so far as that all the religious denominations represented in this Society can consistently use and circulate said versions in their several schools and communities.

"*Resolved*, That a copy of the above preamble and resolutions be sent to each of the missionary boards accustomed to receive pecuniary grants from this Society, with a request that the same may be transmitted to their respective mission stations where the Scriptures are in process of translation; and also, that the said several missionary boards be informed, that their applications for aid be accompanied with a declaration, that the versions which they propose to circulate are executed in accordance with the above resolutions."

It was not the design of the Board to dictate rules to any mission or denomination as to translations, but to state what kinds alone this union society could consistently patronize, to wit—such as were of a catholic character.

In 1845, the Board of Managers were led by certain allegations to make the following statement in their Report, (which will explain its object,) in relation to the first of the resolutions above given:—

"Learning that some appear to have misapprehended the design of the above resolution, inferring from it that the English Bible was to be the *standard* to which new versions were in all cases to be rigidly conformed, the Managers would here state that such is not their design. They have always expected, and do still, that all new translations will be carefully made, as was that from the original Hebrew and Greek, and yet so made, in order to be patronized by this body, that the different denominations here united can all use them as they use in common the English Bible. They refer to that version, because, in adopting it for home distribution, it is admitted by all to be a good version, made on *catholic principles*, such as *must* be observed, from its very nature, by every society of mixed denominations engaged in preparing and issuing books. But while the English version is thus referred to, the last part of the above resolution shows, and was designed to show, that *strict* conformity to that model is not required, provided versions be such that 'all religious denominations represented in this Society can consistently use and circulate said versions in their several schools and communities.' Let new versions be made with care from the originals into the tongues of our aborigines, or those of India or China; let a few words of difficult translation be *transferred*, or so *translated*, as in meaning to satisfy the different members of this Bible compact, and the Board will feel at liberty, both from the nature of their union and from the resolution cited, to grant their patronage. One new version has been added the past year, where some of the words referred to were translated by terms satisfactory to missionaries of different creeds. It is hoped, that in this way obstacles which now seem formidable, will ere long be removed, and every land be blessed, as our own so happily is, with a common Bible."

The Society's Monthly Journal.

The Bible Society Record, in newspaper form, is issued at the middle of every month. It contains brief extracts from letters and reports of Auxiliary Societies in different parts of the country; also extracts from Agents' letters, and from those of missionaries and other correspondents in foreign countries. It furnishes a list of all contributions; is sent free of charge to three of the officers of Auxiliaries, and to Life Directors and Life Members. As the operations of the Society are extended, particularly in foreign countries, this work becomes more and more important and interesting.

The paper is also sold, in any number, to Auxiliary Societies, for 12½ cents per annum. Churches or clubs ordering twelve copies to one address, can have them on the same terms. Individual subscribers can receive the work, forwarded in wrappers, for 25 cents per annum, in advance.

Library of the Society.

The Society has a rare collection of Bibles, Commentaries, Grammars, Lexicons, &c., amounting to some twelve hundred copies, most of them presented gratuitously. Among the collection is the Latin Bible of Jensen, printed in Venice in 1476; another of 1500; also Tindal's, Coverdale's, and the Bishops' Bible in English; others in German, French, Italian, Syriac, Turk-

ish, Russian, and in most of the foreign tongues into which translations have been made. The Society always receive with gratitude every copy of the Scriptures, or other volumes, which will throw light on the character of versions, or aid the work of translation. Occasionally one brings us a rare old volume of the Bible, and takes a new copy in its place.

Compendium of Bible Societies in the World.

	Copies of Scriptures issued.
British and Foreign Bible Society, instituted in 1804	25,402,309
American Bible Society, instituted in 1816	8,288,982
Protestant Bible Society at Paris, instituted 1818, with 132 Auxiliaries	261,303
French and Foreign Bible Society at Paris, instituted 1833, with Auxiliaries	205,877
Strasburgh Bible Society, instituted 1815, (chiefly German Bibles and Testaments)	73,918
Issued from the Brit. and For. Bible Society's Depot in Paris, from April, 1820, 2,089,211 copies.	
Icelandic Bible Society, instituted 1815	10,445
Swedish Bible Society, instituted 1808, with Auxiliaries	660,432
Norwegian Bible Society, instituted 1816	38,738
Stavanger Bible Society, instituted 1828	7,017
Finnish Bible Society, instituted 1812, at Abo, with many Branches	110,561
Danish Bible Society, instituted 1814, with Auxiliaries	193,692
Netherlands Bible Society, with Auxiliaries	456,420
Belgian and Foreign Bible Society, at Brussels, instituted 1834	7,628
Belgian Bible Associations, instituted 1839	14,909
Antwerp Bible Society, instituted 1834	439
Ghent Bible Society, instituted 1834	8,980
Sleswick-Holstein Bible Society, instituted 1815, with Auxiliaries	130,296
Eutin Bible Society, instituted 1817, for the principality of Lubeck	5,296
Lubeck Bible Society, instituted 1814	14,644
Hamburgh Bible Society, instituted 1814, with Branches	97,631
Bremen Bible Society, instituted 1815, with an Auxiliary	26,913
Lanenburgh-Ratzeburgh Bible Society, instituted 1816	10,655
Rostock Bible Society, instituted 1816	19,154
Hanover Bible Society, instituted 1814, with Auxiliaries	125,539
Lippe-Detmold Bible Society, instituted 1816	3,569
Waldeck and Pyrmont Bible Society, instituted 1817	2,809
Hesse-Cassel Bible Society, instituted 1818	30,000
Hanau Bible Society, instituted 1818	3,316
Marburg Bible Society, instituted 1825	7,832
Frankfort Bible Society, instituted 1816	73,565
Hesse-Darmstadt Bible Society, instituted 1817, with Auxiliaries	31,484
Duchy of Baden Bible Society, instituted 1820, with Auxiliaries	18,585
Wurtemburg Bible Society, instituted 1812, with Auxiliaries	601,797
Bavarian Protestant Bible Institution at Nuremburg, instituted 1821, with Auxiliaries	169,844
Saxon Bible Society, instituted 1814, with Auxiliaries	269,664
Anhalt-Bernburg Bible Society, instituted 1821	4,786
Anhalt-Dessau Bible Society	3,310
Weimar Bible Society, instituted 1821	3,773
Eisenach Bible Society, instituted 1818	4,938
Brunswick Bible Society, instituted 1815	700
Prussian Bible Society at Berlin, instituted 1805, with Auxiliaries	1,678,677
Issued to the Prussian Troops since 1830	344,938
Basle Bible Society, instituted 1804	423,814
Schaffhausen Bible Society, instituted 1813	13,179
Zurich Bible Society, instituted 1812, with Auxiliary at Winterthur	15,163
St. Gall Bible Society, instituted 1813	37,436
Aargovian Bible Society, instituted 1815	19,454

	Copies of Scriptures issued.
Berne Bible Society	44,646
Neufchatel Bible Society, instituted 1816	19,016
Lausanne Bible Society, instituted 1814	47,092
Geneva Bible Society, instituted 1814	69,474
Glarus Bible Society, instituted 1819	5,000
Coire or Chur Bible Society, instituted 1813	12,267
Waldenses' Bible Society at La Tour, instituted 1816	4,238
Ionian Bible Society, instituted at Corfu in 1819, with three Auxiliaries	7,377
Russian Bible Society, St. Petersburg, previous to its suspension by an Imperial Ukase in 1826, had 289 Auxiliaries, and had printed the Scriptures in various languages; the circulation of which is still allowed	861,105
Russian Protestant Bible Society at St. Petersburg, instituted in 1826, with numerous Auxiliaries	250,325
Calcutta Bible Society, instituted 1811, with various Branches	674,654
Serampore Missionaries	200,000
Madras Bible Society, instituted 1820	701,409
Bombay Bible Society, instituted 1813	185,632
Colombo Bible Society, instituted 1812, with various Branches in Ceylon	39,263
Jaffna Bible Society	102,323
North India Bible Society at Agra, instituted 1845	46,574
American and Foreign Bible Society (Baptist,) instituted 1837	403,246
American Bible Union (Baptist,) instituted 1851	

The aggregate number of Bibles and Testaments issued by the Societies above enumerated, since the year 1804, is *forty millions, seven hundred and twenty-six thousand, seven hundred and forty-one.*

Importance of Bible Societies as to Prices of Books, &c.

The time has been when the Word of God was the most expensive book in the world. Madox, in his *History of the Exchequer*, says, "that in 1240 the building of two arches of London Bridge cost eight pounds less than the esti mated value of a single Bible which a certain abbot bequeathed to the abbey of Croxton." In 1272, it is said that a labouring man was obliged to lay aside the wages of fourteen years in order to be able to procure a Bible. In 1299, the Bishop of Winchester borrowed a Bible from a convent in that city, and was obliged to give his bond, drawn up in the most formal and solemn manner, for its return at a certain specified time.

At the time when this Society was formed, the very cheapest Bibles that were published could not be procured for less than one dollar and one dollar and a half a copy; while the larger and better prepared editions were proportionally more expensive. In the early history of the Bible effort in this country, large districts were supplied with the Scriptures at the prices just named, and as a consequence, the friends of the Cause laboured under very great disadvantages.

A good plain quarto Bible, with Family Register, is now sold by the American Bible Society for $2; an octavo for 87½ cents; a minion at 37½; and a nonpareil for 25 cents; while the New Testament is furnished for 6¼ cents. The book of Revelation, infinitely the best of all books, has become also, for its size, the lowest of all in price. It should be remembered, too, that when Bibles are circulated, like other books, through private dealers, they go mostly to those who have the means and the disposition to purchase; but the distributions through Bible societies reach *first* those who are without the Bible, poor, and often with little desire to seek the treasure which is brought to their door by the hand of benevolence. Bible societies thus *begin* distributions

where the bookmerchant leaves off. This accounts for the great fact that for the three last centuries since the Reformation, not five millions of Bibles were published, while in the first half of this century nearly forty millions have been put in circulation by Bible societies alone.

Languages into which the Bible has been Translated.

The number of translations of the Scriptures, or parts of them, which have already been made into the various languages and dialects spoken among men, is not far from two hundred. One hundred and ninety of these* will be found in the enumeration which follows, to wit: into the languages of

Accra.
Aimara.
Albanian.
Amharic.
Arabic.
Armeno-Turkish.
Armenian, (Ancient.)
Armenian, (Modern.)
Armenian, (Ararat.)
Assamese.
Arrawack.
Bikancera.
Burmese.
Brij-bhasa.
Buriat.
Basque.
Berber.
Bengali.
Bullom.
Bohemian.
Breton.
Bulgarian.
Belochee.
Bughelcundee.
Canarese.
Caffre.
Carshun.
Choctaw.
Creolese.
Chaldaic.
Chinese.
Cingalese.
Chippeway.
Coptic.
Crimean-Tartar.
Canoj.
Cashmerian.
Cutchee.
Calmuc.
Dajack.
Delaware.
Danish.
Dakota.
Dutch.
Dorpat-Esthonian.
Dogura.
Enghadine.
English.
Esquimaux.
Esthonian-Reval.
Ethiopic.
Escuara.
Feejean.
Finnish.
Flemish.
French.
Faroese.
Grebo.
Gaelic.
German.
Greek, (Ancient.)
Greek, (Modern.)
Greenlandish.
Georgian, (in Ecclesiastical characters.)
Georgian, (in common characters.)
Gurwhal.
Gujerattee.
Graeco-Turkish.
Hebrew.
Hawaiian.
Hindustani.
Hungarian.
Hungarian-Wendish.
Hinduwe.
Harrottee.
Hindui-Kaithi.
Hindui-Nagri.
Indo-Portuguese.
Irish.
Italian.
Icelandic.
Javanese.
Juyapoora.
Japanese.
Judæo-Arabic.
Judæo-Persic.
Judæo-Spanish.
Kousulu.
Karelian.
Karass.
Kinika.
Khassee.
Kumaon.
Kunkuna.
Latin.
Loochoan.
Lapponese.
Lepcha.
Lithuanian.
Lettonian.
Livonian.
Moldavian.
Maghuda.
Mexican.
Mohawk.
Marquesan.

* With the exception of about *forty* of the above translations, all have been made since the Bible Society era in 1804. In publishing *twenty-five* of them the American Bible Society has been at the whole expense, and has assisted in publishing nearly as many more.

Malagasse.	Orissa.	Sanskrit.
Maori.	Oodeypooran.	Sindhee.
Malay, (Roman char.)	Persian.	Singhalese.
Malay, (Arabic.)	Pali.	Seneca.
Malay, (Low.)	Piedmontese.	Tahitian.
Malayalim.	Parsee.	Telinga.
Mare.	Polish.	Tartar.
Mandingo.	Portuguese.	Tamil.
Mahratta.	Punjabee.	Turkish.
Manchou.	Pushtoo.	Tulu.
Munipoora.	Palpa.	Tscheremissian.
Manks.	Quanian.	Teloogo.
Moultan.	Rarotongan.	Trans-Caucasian-Tar-
Marwar.	Russ.	tar.
Mongolian.	Romanese.	Urdu-Nagri.
Mordvinian.	Samogitian.	Uriya.
Madagasse.	Siamese.	Urdu-Arabic.
Mpongwe.	Samoan.	Urdu-Persian.
Negro Dialect, Surinam.	Sesuto.	Vaudois.
Nepaulese.	Seehuana.	Virat.
New Zealand.	Servian.	Wallachian.
Namacqua.	Spanish.	Welsh.
New Caledonian.	Swedish.	Wendish, (Upper.)
Ossitinian.	Syriac.	Wendish, (Lower.)
Orenburgh-Tartar.	Slavonic.	Yoruba.
Oujjuyunee.	Syro-Chaldaic.	Zirian.

By glancing at this enumeration, it will be seen that the Scriptures, or parts of them, have been translated into most of the principal languages used among men, and that this blessed Book has, by this means, been thrown open to the great mass of the population of the globe. Encouragement is thus afforded that the work of the world's evangelization is rapidly going forward, and that the Divine pledge will at no distant day be fulfilled, that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea."

Condition of the World with respect to Bible Distribution.

The openings which Providence has made, within a few years past, for the unobstructed dissemination of the Holy Scriptures are of the most extraordinary character. When the foundation of this Society was laid, almost the entire world was closed up against the circulation of the Bible. Its friends can now carry this precious blessing with safety, almost literally, "into all the world."

With the exception of Spain, Portugal, and Italy, the Scriptures are at the present time circulating, to some good extent, in every country in Europe. In Turkey, "a wide and effectual door has been opened" for the Word of God; as also in most parts of India, in Burmah, in Persia, and in populous China. In Africa there are already many points where the light of Divine Truth is beginning to find its way. Many of the islands of the sea are accessible to the friends of the Bible, and some of them are already luminous with its beams. In South America the Scriptures are gradually gaining an entrance. On many of the West India Islands, Bible Depositories have been established, and large

numbers of copies of the Scriptures are circulating. In Mexico there is much to encourage the friends of the Bible to believe that this Divine Book will soon meet with universal respect even there. In every other part of North America, in the Canadas, among the numerous Indian tribes which populate the western and north-western territories, the Scriptures are beginning to have free course. Indeed, almost the whole world, in the providence of God, has in late years, been thrown wide open to the friends of the Bible, and they invited to go up and possess the world for Christ. Changes the most astonishing have taken place, in this respect, among nearly all the nations of the earth. Hundreds of millions of men, who could not be reached when this Society was organized, can now read in their own language the wonderful works of God, and stand urging us to bring them without delay the Word of Life: and the God of the Bible, as He precedes His people in the heavenly enterprise of evangelizing the earth—preparing the way for them to advance, says to them, in language not to be mistaken, "Thrust in thy sickle and reap; for the time has come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe!"

Number Destitute of Bibles in the World.

It is thought by those who are most competent to judge in reference to such matters, that the entire number of Bibles and Testaments in the world does not much exceed fifty millions. These are for the most part confined to nominally Christian countries, and to a very great extent to strictly Christian families; so that the world at large is still lying in "the region and shadow of death."

The population of the globe is usually set down at about a thousand millions. Upon this basis of calculation, admitting that there are fifty millions of Bibles in the world, we are met with the astounding and most painful conclusion, that more than eight hundred millions, or four-fifths of our fellow men, are living in utter ignorance of this blessed Book. If all the Bibles now on earth were equally distributed among its inhabitants, there would be but about one Bible for every thirty-one souls!

Number Destitute of Bibles in the United States.

There are, probably, as many Bibles in this country, in proportion to the number of its inhabitants, as in any other part of the world; and yet, recent explorations have brought to view the astounding and humiliating fact, that there are vast numbers in the midst of us, who are passing through the world to the awards of the eternal state, without this Divine source of consolation and light in their dwellings.

In the city of New York, within the last two or three years past, it has been ascertained that about one-fifth of the population were living in destitution of the Word of God. In two wards in the city of Cincinnati, among 3,689 families visited, 626, or about one-sixth of them were found unsupplied with the Scriptures. In the city of Louisville, the destitution was found to be over one-fifth. In the city of Baltimore, during the last year, 13,232 families were visited, and 1,034, or one-thirteenth of them, it was discovered, were living without Bibles. In the city of Auburn, New York, one-twelfth of the families visited had not an entire copy of the Scriptures in their dwellings.

Upon careful inquiry it was found, during the year 1850, that among 13,555

families visited in Rhode Island, nearly 1,000 were destitute of Bibles. Among 7,287 families called upon in New Hampshire, during the year 1851, there were found 327 unsupplied with the Scriptures.

In Middlesex County, Connecticut, among 4,298 families visited, 226 were ascertained to be destitute.

In Vermont an equal amount of destitution prevails. In Barnstable County, Mass., 6,000 families were visited; 140 of them were entirely destitute; 100 more had only parts of the Scriptures, and 100 more were so nearly destitute as to make it a duty immediately to supply them.

In the county of Onandaga, New York, 11,283 families were visited during the last year, and 1,234 of them were ascertained to be living without the Holy Scriptures in their dwellings. In the town of Granby, Oswego County, in the same State, 119 families out of 714 were found in the same unhappy condition. In the city of Williamsburgh, Long Island, one-seventh of the population were discovered to be without Bibles. In Middlesex County, New Jersey, 196 destitute families were found among 4,500 which were visited. In the county of Hunterdon, in the same State, 241 destitute families were found among 4,641 which were called upon. In Burlington County, also in New Jersey, in a population of 40,000, one-quarter, or 10,000 souls, were found unsupplied with the Scriptures. In Lancaster County, Penn., 7,000 families were visited during the years 1850 and 1851, and 409 of them had no Bibles; two-thirds of them being nominally Protestant families. The Pennsylvania Bible Society's report says, "that when the exploration of this county began, there must have been 771 families, and more than 3,000 persons living in families, unsupplied with Bibles, besides 1,000 children in those families supposed to be too young to profit by the Bible." In some counties in this State, one family in four, and in others, one in five or six, have been discovered without this priceless treasure. In Sussex County, Delaware, 3,483 were applied to, and 589, or between one-fifth and one-sixth of the number were found to be in a state of utter destitution. In Kent County, Maryland, one family in ten was found without the Scriptures. In the county of Cecil, in the same State, about one family in eight was ascertained to be unsupplied with this good Book.

The report of the Virginia Bible Society for 1851 says: "From the best information that we can obtain, there are probably not less than 8,000 or 9,000 families in that State destitute of the Word of God." In Halifax County, in the same State, one-fifth of the population were destitute. In the county of Wetzell, also in Virginia, about one family in four was found living without the Holy Scriptures. In several counties in North Carolina, during the year just closed, the destitution was found to be as much as one-fifth, and even as much as one-fourth. In Randolph and Davidson Counties, one family in four was found to be in this condition. In Richland County, South Carolina, during the last exploration which was made there, among 630 families visited, 150 were living without God's Word in their houses. In Georgia, in some cases, one-third, in others, even one-half of the families visited were in the same situation. One distributer states that "he called at a house in that State, where the wife had been a member of a Christian church for the period of fourteen years, and yet had never owned a copy of the Word of God during all that time!"

In the States of Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, and Louisiana, destitutions

have been brought to view as great as any that have been described. In Williamson County, Tennessee, among 3,317 families visited, 336 had no Bibles. In Pond Creek and vicinity, in the same State, 296 families out of 1,244 were without copies of the Scriptures.

In Barren County, Kentucky, 126 families out of 551 were recently discovered to be living in destitution of God's Word. One distributer met with three families in the vicinity of Louisville, in that State, in which either the father or the mother had belonged to the Church for a period of at least ten years, but had never been in possession of the Bible. In Benton County, Arkansas, 590 families were visited, and 167, or a little more than one-third of them, had no Bibles. "In the south and south-western portions of Missouri," says an agent, "I have found the destitution of the Scriptures to be very great. Families have been found here, in good circumstances, who for two generations have had no Bibles in their habitations."

In several counties in Ohio, one family in six, and in some, one in five, and one in four, have been found unsupplied with the Scriptures. In the county of Ashland, in that State, 322 families out of 3,159 were ascertained to be destitute; and of the eighty-one common schools in the county, fifty-two made no use whatever of the Holy Scriptures in their course of instruction. In Indiana the destitution has amounted, in some cases, to one-third, and even to one-half. "Of all the persons visited in the recent explorations in Southern Illinois," says one of our agents, "an average of one-half were ascertained to be unable to read or write, and from one-third to one-fifth who were entirely destitute of the Scriptures." Some girls were found, between twelve and fourteen years of age, who had never seen a Bible or Testament! In Michigan, as many as one family in six have been found wholly destitute of the Bible. "In parts of Iowa," says one of our agents, "at least one-sixth of the families visited have been found destitute." "In supplying counties for the first time in Wisconsin," says one of our agents, "we have generally found about one-sixth of the population destitute of the Word of God, and about one-half of the readers under fifteen years of age without New Testaments!"

We could add more, but if these cases will not move to reflection and action, a volume would not.

Importance of Frequent Explorations.

Such is the rapid growth of our population, both by natural increase and by immigration, and so numerous and great are the changes which are continually going on throughout the country, that the work of exploration must be very frequently attended to. How frequently this work should be performed, in all cases, we have not the means of determining. Particular sections of the country need to be supplied more frequently than others; and yet we are convinced, from what we see and hear, that the work should be thoroughly attended to as often at least as once in five years, and in the newly settled districts oftener.

The Secretary of the Allen County Bible Society, Indiana, says: "About three years intervened between our first effort to supply the county and our second, and yet we found the destitution of the Scriptures here quite as great as at first." The city of Louisville, Kentucky, was thoroughly canvassed and supplied in the year 1840, and resupplied in the year 1850, when one-third of

the population of the city were found to be living in destitution of the Word of God. The same thing was ascertained to be true in thirty-nine counties in the vicinity of Louisville. Barren county, in the same State, was explored in the year 1841, and yet in 1850, upon a re-exploration, one-fourth of the families in the county were found unsupplied with the Scriptures. Onondaga County, New York, was visited in 1849, and in a population of 11,283 families, 1,234 were found without Bibles, although the county had been thoroughly supplied only six years before. In six towns in the County of Ulster, in the same State, 494 families were discovered destitute of the Scriptures, two-thirds of which were Protestant families; and yet, in the year 1846, every family in the county, excepting Roman Catholic, was supplied. In the county of Washington, Maine, a thorough exploration was made in the year 1845, when one family in five was found unsupplied with the Scriptures: in the year 1850 the same work was performed again, when it was discovered that one family in eleven was in the same deplorable situation. The county of Essex, New Jersey, was canvassed with great thoroughness in the year 1848, and again during the year 1851, when it was found that, without including the city of Newark, there were upwards of 200 Protestant families without the Word of God in their dwellings. Nearly the whole of the city of New York has been explored and supplied with the Scriptures since March, 1849; and although this work has been repeatedly attended to previous to that time, 10,838 families were found to be totally destitute. Similar statements might be made respecting others of our large cities and towns, as well as of other growing and thickly-settled districts of the country. As things now are in the United States, our citizens cannot be kept supplied with the Scriptures, unless the work of exploration be systematically and frequently attended to.

Door Open for Bible Distribution among Immigrants.

A very great responsibility rests upon the friends of the Bible in connexion with the rapidly increasing influx of foreigners into this country. God in His providence is not only opening wide and effectual doors for the dissemination of the Scriptures in foreign lands, but He is causing vast numbers from abroad to come to our own shores, and affording us, by this means, the opportunity of performing the same work here under far more advantageous circumstances. The flood of human beings rushing into this country at the present time is immense. The number who were landed at the single port of New York during the year ending October, 1851, was 272,699—of which 155,484 were natives of Ireland; 63,358 natives of Germany; 26,942 natives of England; 6,943 natives of Scotland; 5,643 natives of France; 4,386 natives of Switzerland; the remainder being natives of other countries in Europe and elsewhere. The number who were landed at the same port, during the six years previous to the time above specified, was 1,175,944, the great majority of whom were from Ireland and other Roman Catholic countries, and came among us in entire destitution of the Word of God. Nor is this all. The number of immigrants now entering this country is greater than it has ever been during any previous year. Within thirty-six hours, in June last, 6,984 persons landed in the city of New York; and within the period of four days, in April last, the number who were landed at the same place amounted to 12,000! And it is thought, by those who are most competent to judge in such matters, that an average of

more than *a thousand a day* are pouring into this country through this single port of entry.

If to these be added the immense numbers who are landed at other ports, as well as those who are rushing down upon us from the river St. Lawrence and the Lakes, and those who are rapidly multiplying upon our great Pacific frontiers, we shall be able to form some estimate of the growth of our population from this source, and of the vast and growing responsibility of the friends of the Bible here, in reference to this class of our fellow men.

To meet the wants of these immigrants in the most promising way, the Society has, within a few years, published the New Testament in Danish, Swedish, German, Dutch, Spanish, and French, each tongue having our English version printed with it, in parallel columns. These books prove highly acceptable and useful, and are sold at 37½ cents per copy. Many of the Auxiliaries should keep a supply on hand.

Encouragement for Bible Efforts among Roman Catholics.

From the reports of our Auxiliaries and friends in different parts of the country, we are continually receiving assurances of the success of our efforts to place the Scriptures in the hands of Roman Catholics among us. Although many of this class refuse the Word of Life when it is offered to them, there are very many who accept of it with every manifestation of gratitude; and some who become thereby wise unto salvation. In the city of Chicago, during the year 1851, the Bible was cordially received by 915 Roman Catholic families. In a portion of the city of Cincinnati, which is densely populated with this class of people, only one-fourth of the whole number of families which were destitute of the Bible refused it when it was offered to them; while in the two years preceding, as many as three-fifths of those who were destitute would not receive it. In a portion of Maryland, during the year ending May, 1852, of 939 Roman Catholic families called upon, 444 already possessed Bibles; and of the remaining 515 who were destitute, only 128 declined to accept of the Book as a gift. In the city of New York, during the year which closed October, 1851, there were 11,944 copies of the Scriptures placed in the hands of German and Irish Catholic immigrants when they were first landed; and very many, in receiving the proffered boon, gave open and unmistakeable tokens of their delight. In addition to this, there were many Roman Catholic families found among the resident population, which received gladly this priceless blessing. Among the Mexican and German Catholic population of Texas there is a great and growing demand for the Word of God. "The more intelligent of them," says one of our Agents, "inquire eagerly for the Bible, and will not give it up when ordered to do so by their priests. The licentiousness of their priests has opened the eyes of multitudes, and led them to look for a holier religion." "In California," says Mr. Buel, "the Spanish population are most earnest in their endeavours to procure the Scriptures. Instead of complaining of the prices at which they are sold, they are willing to purchase copies at almost any price." A large number of Catholic families in New Mexico have recently been supplied with Bibles by the Rev. Mr. Nicholson, one of the missionaries of the Methodist Episcopal Missionary Board. In the southern and south-western portions of Missouri, many Roman Catholics have rejected Romanism, having become disgusted with its mummery and wicked-

ness, and have gladly possessed themselves of the Sacred Oracles. The desire among Catholics to read the Bible is more and more evident among the French of Western Louisiana and the German population of New Orleans. In this last named city, among 1,454 Roman Catholic families, 719 already possessed copies of the Scriptures: and 273 of the remaining number were supplied during the last year by our Colporteurs. "One of the most interesting features of our Bible work in Detroit," says one of our Agents, "is the success which our French distributer has met with among his Roman Catholic countrymen. He has been engaged in the work considerably over a year, and his success is without a parallel."

Similar are the statements which are sent up to us from many other portions of our land.

Says a colporteur in New York: "I gave a New Testament to a Catholic woman who is living out as a domestic, and she grasped my hand, and said: 'I thank you for ever! I receive this as a gift from God this morning.'" Says another: "I gave five Testaments to-day to some German Catholics. One of them, who was a father, wept, and clasping my hand, cried, 'This Testament gives me more pleasure than a hundred dollars. It is a good omen, that the good God wishes to do me good in this country.' Gave twenty Testaments to some German Catholics, all of whom received them gladly." "I gave a Bible," says another, "to a Spaniard who was a Catholic, and I learn that he has not ceased to read it since every day. The book is worth more to him, he says, than money." "Gave the Bible," says another, "to a young Irishman, who told me that he had once been compelled to go forty miles to do penance for reading two verses of the Irish Bible. And what will you do here? I inquired. 'Sure,' said he, 'I've a conscience of my own, and I'll seek the way that is best.'" Says Mr. Pierson, the Marine Bible Agent of New York: "As to the Irish Romanists, who form a majority of the immigrants, it is still a question, as to how great an extent they will receive the Bible. Many refuse, but I very rarely hear of a Bible, when accepted, being abused or destroyed. German immigrants, who make up the mass of steerage passengers in vessels from Havre, Antwerp, and Rotterdam, and in the summer, to the extent of one-half in the London packets, accept the Bible generally and gladly." Says Mr. Watson, of New York: "A really venerable-looking German replied with bitterness to my inquiry whether he had a Bible, that he 'wanted neither Bibles nor priests. He did not desire the Bible; and as to the priests, he would hang them or cut their throats,' going through the process in pantomime, that I might clearly understand him. I replied mildly, by quoting some passages of Scripture, and affirming his need of the Saviour, &c., and left him. As I returned at evening, he stood by his door, and after I had passed, I reflected that perhaps another effort might do good. I therefore turned back, and stepping up to him, said, 'If I *give* you a New Testament in German, will you not read it?' God had been before me. With an entirely altered tone and manner he received it, inviting me in, and thanking me, as I uttered the hope that it would do his soul good."

Facts of a similar character, which are continually coming to us, might be added to an indefinite extent, if it were necessary. But enough has been said to show that our work among this portion of our people is meeting with the greatest encouragement on every side, and to stimulate us all to persevere in

this work until all our fellow citizens shall be possessed of the Oracles of God. We have no doubt that the Scriptures are noiselessly finding their way into the hands of tens of thousands of this class among us, and that very large numbers, enlightened by this means, are every where fearlessly and for ever renouncing the Roman Catholic faith.

Encouragement for Bible Efforts among Seamen.

While the Scriptures are having "free course" among other classes of men, it is gratifying to know that they are getting also in large numbers into the hands of those who do business upon the sea. During the year closing October, 1851, the New York Bible Society distributed among seamen 12,796 copies of the Scriptures; and many instances are known, in which this effort has been attended with the happiest results. In the city of Boston, the Massachusetts Bible Society last year put into circulation among seamen 2,441 copies of the Scriptures. A considerable number are annually distributed among this class at Charleston, New Orleans, and Baltimore. At Searsport, Maine, eighty-five Bibles and Testaments were given last year to seamen in that vicinity. At New Bedford, Mass., and New London, Conn., many seamen are annually supplied with the Word of Life. At Edgartown, Mass., 150 Bibles and Testaments were distributed last year among sailors leaving that port. Among sailors touching at Philadelphia during the year closing May, 1852, the distribution amounted to 8,000 copies. From other seaports, facts equally encouraging are continually coming to our notice. Large numbers of Bibles are in this way getting into the hands of this noble but too much neglected class of men; and in instances not a few, they are blessed to their spiritual and everlasting good.

Seamen, moreover, are rendering themselves useful by promoting the circulation of the Scriptures among other destitute classes. During the last year, packages of Bibles were intrusted to them on 419 vessels at the single port of New York, for distribution among immigrants from Europe on their return voyage to this country. There are many instances in which they have sought and obtained Bibles for their acquaintances and friends in remote parts of the world, and some cases in which they have been instrumental in transmitting the Scriptures into the most inaccessible countries of Europe, and far into the interior of Asia, Africa, and South America. The following extracts from the journal of Mr. Pierson, Marine Bible Agent for New York City, will show that the efforts among seamen constitute one of the most encouraging departments of our work:—

"On the Portuguese brig ——," says Mr. P., "I have circulated, mostly by sale, some thirty-six Bibles and Testaments in that language. Also upon another vessel of the same nation, I have sold and given thirty-five copies of the Portuguese Scriptures; making, in two voyages, some sixty copies upon one vessel.

"On a Brazilian brig from Bahia, sold some twelve Bibles and Testaments, in Portuguese, and was shown by a sailor a Bible in that language, of this Society's issue, neatly covered with canvass, which, as he said, he had procured at Lisbon, evidently coming originally from this port.

"Gave eight Testaments, upon a Portuguese brig, to sailors who could not purchase, and received a pleasant expression of gratitude from one man, who,

beckoning me to stop, ran below for a moment, and reappeared with a bottle of wine, which he wished me to accept in acknowledgment, and which he would scarcely allow me to decline. On another occasion, the crew of a Spanish brig came, all hands, with cigars, and would have filled my pockets had I allowed them.

"Another Portuguese sailor told me that he had been offered five dollars in Portugal for the Bible which he had bought here on a previous voyage, but had refused it, preferring to leave it with his mother. On an American vessel, another Portuguese sailor bought one dozen Bibles and Testaments to give away in Madeira. His order was for twice that number, but his money gave out.

"Upon a Spanish vessel from Barcelona, nine Spanish Testaments were sold in a few minutes, and orders received for two Bibles, to be lettered with the name on the cover, as presents for families in Spain. On another Spanish vessel, the mate eagerly availed himself of the opportunity to buy a 'book like the one in the cabin,' (a Bible presented by myself two years ago,) which, he said, he had long been looking for.

"Upon the Genoese brig ——, I sold fifteen copies of the Italian Scriptures to very eager purchasers.

"The captain of the Italian brig —— states that his brother, a parish priest near Genoa, to whom he had taken a Bible and some tracts from this port, has lately come to encourage from the pulpit the reading of the Scriptures among his people.

"In the captain of the brig ——, bound on a six months' coasting voyage along the eastern coast of Africa, I found a man much interested in the work of Bible distribution, and was glad to assist in placing in so good hands a small supply (from the American Bible Society) of Scriptures in French, Portuguese, and Arabic, for distribution at Mozambique, Zanzibar, and in the other settlements in that rarely visited region.

"Received a pleasant account from the mate of the bark ——, of the usefulness of a few Spanish Testaments, procured in the same way, some months since, for distribution at Malaga. He says that on Sundays the shipping is overrun with visiters from the country, and to such the captain gave the Testaments. In another case, several Spanish Testaments were given, in the same port, with great acceptableness, upon two Spanish vessels lying alongside. The captain of the brig —— also gives a very cheering account of the distribution of a few Testaments which I procured for him last voyage, among the settlements far up the river Orinoco.

"During the past month, have furnished with a copy of the Scriptures, in the suitable foreign languages, the cabins of some ten vessels trading regularly to ports in the West Indies and South America. All the testimony, as to the books thus placed, is to the same effect—that they are filling a very usefu office, in spreading widely a knowledge of the Bible and a desire for it, among persons who might otherwise remain in ignorance perhaps of its existence.

"On the brig ——, thus supplied with a Spanish Bible, I had the pleasure of filling an order brought by the captain, from the captain of a Spanish port, for a volume similar to the one on the cabin table. These copies serve thus a valuable purpose as *specimens*, from which orders can be sent to New York for the same. I have just heard of a case in which two copies were sent for in

this way from Merida, Yucatan; also of another, resulting in a considerable order for Spanish Scriptures from a mercantile house on the western coast of Central America.

"On the brig ——, packet to a port in the West Indies, I was informed by the captain, that he had lost the Spanish Bible presented to the vessel in the following manner:—A visiter from the shore had taken a fancy to it, and pressed him to sell it. This he refused to do, but consented to bring him one like it from New York next voyage. 'This I neglected to do. On my return, in his disappointment, he seized the ship's Bible, and refuses to give it up till I have fulfilled my promise. So you must sell me a copy, that I may make the redemption.'

"The captain of a Rio packet, in apologizing for the absence of the ship's Portuguese Bible from the cabin, said that a Brazilian planter, a passenger, had carried it away. 'He begged so hard for it, that I could not refuse him.' This case may illustrate the manner in which books thus placed may disappear without by any means finishing their course of usefulness.

"Captain ——, of the brig ——, states that the half-dozen Spanish Testaments placed in the cabin were given by him to native passengers, mostly planters from the interior.

"The Rev. Mr. ——, Chaplain of the American Seaman's Friend Society, at a port in a Catholic country, bears emphatic testimony to the usefulness of foreign Scriptures placed in the cabins of American vessels trading there; stating that when visiting a vessel thus furnished, he has almost always found the Bible in the hands of some reader from the shore. It is in these ways that we hope to convert, more and more, our merchant shipping into a *missionary marine*, carrying every where the Word of Life.

"In Captain C., of the brig ——, packet to a port in the West Indies, I found a man accustomed to improve the opportunities given him by his occupation, for the purpose of doing good. He ordered at once a half-dozen of the Society's new Spanish Bible for circulation there.

"Sold to the steward of the barque —— six Spanish Testaments to give to acquaintances at the port to which the vessel was bound. He is in the habit of purchasing for this purpose. Also to a Mexican sailor from the Pacific coast, two Spanish Bibles and six Testaments, for friends in Sonora.

"The captain of a Venezuelan barque, who requested my assistance in procuring for him some Testaments and other books, for the establishment of a Sabbath School among the English residents at a port in that country, stated that this enterprise may be considered as having originated in the interest excited among the native population, by the Spanish Testaments and other books brought at various times from this city on his vessel: and that now, on his first arriving there, he can hardly go into the street with a parcel under his arm, without being asked if it does not contain something of this kind to give away.

"Had a very interesting visit upon the Genoese brig ——, just arrived. There were a number of passengers on board, of the better class, and a good deal of curiosity prevailed as to Protestantism. Among the questions asked was, 'Why do our priests forbid us to read the Bible?' Without giving a direct answer, I asked for the large Bible from the cabin, (presented in this port on a former voyage,) as a copy in which they had confidence, and told the

inquirer that he should read and judge for himself. All gathered with deep interest around the capstan, on which lay the Bible, while one read aloud certain passages I pointed out to him—the usually quoted ones in which Scripture contradicts the celibacy of the clergy, image worship, prayers in an unknown tongue, and other practices of the Romish Church. As he proceeded with passage after passage, the lively expressions of surprise which came from every quarter showed that the line of argument was understood, and needed no hint of mine to suggest the conclusion. From the gusto with which the description of a good bishop, in the first Epistle to Timothy, was dwelt upon, it was evident that it was taken as a pointed satire upon their priests. I have before seen this application made without a hint from myself. My sales were fifteen copies."

Instances of Good done by the Circulation of the Scriptures.

Near the farm of an infidel who had great respect for the writings of Paine lived a family entirely destitute of the Bible. By some means the lady became serious. This the infidel perceiving, he endeavoured to quiet her; furnished her with infidel books, and in various ways sought to divert her mind to other subjects. But she only became the more serious under his management. At last she solicited the use of a Bible which he had in his possession, and securing it, read it with the utmost attention, and soon became a believer in Jesus, united with the Church, and is now rejoicing in God her Saviour.

In ———, an individual, who was a confirmed skeptic, one day reproved his child for using profane language, though he himself was in the habit of using such language. In the course of his conversation with the child, he took up his Bible to read to him what it said on the subject, with the hope that this would add weight to his counsels. As he read along, he became, by degrees, strangely and most deeply interested. He soon forgot the object for which he took up the Bible, and thought only of himself as a lost and ruined sinner. In a few weeks he sought and obtained "the Pearl of great price," and is now a consistent member of the Church.

"At another place," says an Agent, "I visited seven families which were connected with a distillery. In one of these, I found a young lady who was deplorably ignorant of the Christian system. I conversed with her at considerable length, and endeavoured to open her mind to the leading truths which characterize the Gospel. I let her have a copy of the Scriptures, and desired her to read it with attention and prayer; and at the expiration of a few weeks, when I called upon her again, I found, to my great joy, that she had surrendered her heart to the Saviour, been baptized, and that she had connected herself with a Christian Church, and was giving promise of great usefulness in the community where she resides."

"In the village of ———," he continues, "I called at a house in which two families were living, and presented each of them with a copy of the Scriptures. Not long after, I learned that my visit had been blessed to one of the families; the father and mother of which, becoming deeply interested in the matter of their own personal salvation, had sought the prayers of the Church, and, as we have reason to hope, have since become experimentally acquainted with Christ, and, as I am informed, are expected soon to connect themselves with the Church."

A young gentleman, with a view to the ministry, placed himself under the care of the Presbytery of ———, a few days since. In giving his knowledge of experimental religion, he traced his conviction and conversion directly to the reading of the Bible. After he had finished his collegiate course, he engaged to teach in an academy. His predecessor had opened the exercises of each day, by reading a portion of the Scriptures, and prayer. The latter he did not attempt, as he never had prayed more than saying the Lord's Prayer. But he opened the school by reading a portion of the Scriptures. His attention was first arrested by that passage which affirms that "the servant who knows his lord's will, and does it not, shall be beaten with many stripes." Other portions of the Scriptures deepened his convictions, until he was enabled to put his whole dependence for salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ.

"In my visits to-day," says one of our distributers in Wisconsin, "I met an unfortunate youth, about fourteen years of age, who for two years past has been grievously afflicted. The family of which he is a member possesses one well worn and much injured Bible. During his long confinement the lad has seldom been able to hear a sermon; but about a year ago a great change took place in his character. He was often compelled to hear language the most profane and corrupting. Amid these unpropitious circumstances, the Bible was his constant companion. Day after day, in his weakness, he has lain upon the floor, reading the Scriptures. At length he sent for a friend to come and pray with him: and now, we have reason to believe that he is a disciple of the Saviour. The great instrumentality in his renewal was the Word of God."

A profane father bought a large Bible for his family, though he was unable to read it himself, and with a dreadful oath, he said he would have it read in his family every day. This oath, wicked as it was in its nature, was attended with the happiest results; "for, behold, he prayeth," may now be said of him, while his wife and four children have become hopefully pious, and connected themselves with the Church.

A pious man, in North Carolina, found that two of his neighbours were living without the Bible; and on a certain evening, taking with him some copies, he went to see them; and after conversation and prayer, he presented them each with a Bible. In about three months after, he had the satisfaction of seeing one of them, with his wife, connect himself with a Christian church. In the case of the other neighbour, although the result was not so strongly marked, yet there was a great change in the family for the better.

In the reorganizing of a society at the West, the newly-elected president related a very affecting circumstance. He stated that about six years before, he was an infidel, and that a Bible distributer called at his house, who soon made known his business, and inquired if he had a supply of Bibles and Testaments. He was answered that he had as many as he wanted. The distributer stated that he was authorized to supply all who were destitute of the Scriptures gratuitously. He then said plainly that he had neither Bible nor Testament in his house, and that he would neither accept of one as a gratuity, nor purchase one. The distributer then told him, that if he had no objection he would present one to his little daughter. He did so and left. Time rolled on. The Bible lay neglected on the shelf. All at once it occurred to him that he had then a capital opportunity to investigate its truths; and accordingly,

laying aside his prejudices as far as he was able, he began to read the Book. He had not proceeded far, however, before he became perfectly convinced that the Bible was from God, and that the Christian religion was founded in truth. He accordingly renounced his infidelity, and became an unwavering believer in the truth of the Gospel. At the conclusion of the statement, he said, "God be thanked, that in mercy to him and his family, He had influenced the Bible distributer to call at his house."

A colporteur in Cincinnati once met with a man over forty years old, who had been six years in the country, and had never seen a Bible. Parts of it he had seen, and had read some passages in books of devotion, but a whole Bible he had never met with. He received one gladly. Three days after, the colporteur met him again, and inquired how he liked the book. The man replied, that if he could not get another, he would not exchange it for its weight in gold. For three nights he had not undressed nor gone to bed. He had read the Bible all night, and had committed two chapters to memory, one of which he repeated *verbatim* on the spot. The colporteur said to him, "But you will have to confess this to your priest, and he will take the book from you." "No he won't," said the man, "for I am not going to confession again. I have learned that I must confess my sins unto God, and ask pardon through Jesus Christ, and the priest must do so too. I shall go to the priest for pardon no more."

In Ohio there was a skeptical lawyer who had a pious wife. This man was frequently belaboured with learned arguments by great and good men in vain; but a pious old man once asked him, as a small favour, that he would read two chapters each morning, until he should come around again in a few weeks. He agreed to do so. The first morning he read not only two, but three; the next day more; and the next still more; and when the preacher came around, the lawyer met him with open arms, saying, "I am no longer a skeptic." The internal evidence had vanquished his skepticism.

In Northern New York, an elder in a Presbyterian church, in one of his walks of charity, found a poor widow without the Bible, and presented one to her. She replied to him, that the Bible could be of no use to her, as she could not read it, and she was too poor to educate her children. He said to her: "You should have a Bible, and you should have your children so educated that they can read it to you. Here, take this Bible, which tells you of your lost condition as a sinner, and the way of salvation by Jesus Christ; and remember you are to be judged by it." After reading a portion of the blessed Word, he bowed in prayer, commending the widow and her children to the widow's God and the Father of the fatherless, and bade them adieu.

Some months after this, at a meeting of the session of the church, this poor widow presented herself, with others, asking an admission to its communion. She was asked to state what had first led her to feel that she was a sinner, and to seek pardon of God. She said: "Elder ——— came to my house, and after faithfully admonishing me, gave me a Bible. I could not read it; neither could my children: but he told me I was to be judged by it, and also the way to be saved by Jesus Christ. I thought on my ways—I mourned over my ignorance. I took my Bible when no eye could see me; I laid it open before me from time to time, and offered my prayer to God. My heart broke in peni-

tence; I found peace, and, I hope, forgiveness; and often, while praying with my open Bible before me, I am so grateful to God for this treasure, I clasp it to my bosom and bless Him. Now I have sent my daughter to school, and she can read pretty well, and she reads the Bible for me, and I can pray both morning and evening." This woman walked some three miles frequently to church; and from an ignorant and prayerless family has become one of order, where the evening and morning incense is offered to God. Did this elder do more than his duty, and might not many follow his example with profit?

Three years ago, an Agent called at the house of a man who despised the Bible, and who sneered at sacred things. After some conversation, he ascertained that the family was without a Bible. He presented a copy to the father. For a time the opposer remained as careless and indifferent as ever. He gave the Bible to his children as a plaything. His wife remonstrated; but he replied that the Bible was his property—was presented to him—and he should do what he pleased with it. His wife was in the habit of going to meeting, while he rarely attended. He told her to inform the minister "not to come to his house, for if he did, he would 'boot' him out." Matters went on thus for some time; but one Sunday, while his wife was gone to meeting, he saw the Bible upon the floor, where the children had left it, and felt a curiosity to look into it. He did so; and the first passage his eyes fastened upon was 1 Tim., i. 15—"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." It seemed to strike his mind with supernatural force, and he desired to read more; but lest he should be discovered in this employment, he took the book and went to his granary and locked himself in; for he was ashamed to be seen reading the Book of God. The result of this awakening and Bible-reading was his hopeful conversion to God; and now he is an active and worthy member of the Christian Church.

"While canvassing a county in the West," says an Agent, "I spent an evening in an afflicted family. The lady had recently returned from a visit to the East, and was accompanied on her journey back by an only brother, the idol of the family, and the jewel of a bright social circle. Soon after his arrival at his sister's residence he was taken ill, and in less than four weeks from the time he reached the prairie-land he was laid in a forest grave. During his sickness, a young man attended him as nurse, who listened to his dying admonitions, and, after his decease, left for another part of the country, bearing with him the gift of a Bible from the bereaved sister. Not long after, a letter was received from him, in which he declared his experience of that great spiritual change which the Bible describes as indispensable to entering the kingdom of God."

At a Bible anniversary in one of the Western States, very recently, a minister of the German Methodist Episcopal Church said: "While many refer to this and that minister as the instrument, in the hands of God, of their conversion, I can say that *I was converted by reading the Bible.* Ah! I love the Bible. I will give my money to circulate the Bible; and when I die, I want the Bible put in the grave with me. Lay it close to my side." He then referred to one of his neighbours, who was a Catholic, in this wise: "Some one gave him a Bible, which he read, when conviction suddenly seized upon his mind. Said he to his wife: 'We are all wrong if the Bible is true; and if it

is true, thank God we may be made right.' He sought and obtained peace by believing in Jesus. His wife became enraged, and left him for her father's house, declaring she would never return again until he had destroyed that Book that had done so much mischief. He prayed to his heavenly Father, and went to see her. After two or three days she came back to his house, and he prevailed upon her, at length, to listen to him while he read the Bible. God owned His own Word; the wife became anxious, and soon obtained a Christian hope, and now they are living together in the enjoyment of religion."

One of our colporteurs not long since visited a house in his ward, and put his usual question of, "Do you want a Bible?" to the person who opened to him. "Oh no; do you not remember me! You supplied me with a copy two years ago." The colporteur then recollected the circumstance. The change was so great, that he could hardly recognise in the individual who stood before him, the former drunken inmate of that house, who had brought himself and family to the extremity of receiving care and food from their kind neighbours. On further inquiry, he found that the Bible had been a blessing to that family. The man himself, as the visitor saw, was now "clothed and in his right mind;" the wife and daughter had connected themselves with the Church; and all around gave evidence, that godliness is profitable for the life that is, as well as for the next.

A religious assembly in Berkshire County, Mass., not long since, was surprised at the sudden appearance of a very profane and wicked man, bathed in tears. He was known by every body in that neighbourhood to be opposed to every thing like piety and the truth; he was proverbially a scoffer and blasphemer. On one occasion, upon finding a Bible at his house, which a distributer had left, he hurled it violently into the street, and heaped his curses upon it as it went: a circumstance which, by the way, was overruled to the conversion of an entire family not far off; one of its members having picked up the book which had thus been dishonoured, and carried it home.

When the man could sufficiently command his feelings, he arose and said, that a few weeks previously he had attended the county fair in a neighbouring town, and seeing a book in an auctioneer's hand, which he was crying up, he bid on it, and it was instantly struck off to him. Upon taking the book, he discovered, with great mortification and displeasure, that it was the Bible. He took it home with him, and contemptuously threw it aside as so much old trumpery. Two or three weeks elapsed, when suddenly calling to mind his purchase, he determined to drag out the book and see what kind of bargain he had made. He began to read the book, and at length became so much interested in it that he could not lay it down. The more he read, the more serious his impressions became, until he was seized with the most deep and overwhelming convictions of his guilt in rejecting Christ and contemning His Gospel. He then said, "I fell on my knees and begged for the forgiveness of my sins, and I have come here to-night to ask you to intercede in my behalf. Oh, pray for me, that God will have mercy upon my poor guilty soul!" The sequel is, that this bold and impious blasphemer surrendered himself up to the Saviour, and from that time he has lived the life of a consistent and efficient Christian.

Sentiments of Prominent Men in reference to the Bible.

The following sentiments from the published speeches of some of our distinguished countrymen, will show that the Bible has peculiar claims on the citizens of these United States:—

Hon. Theodore Frelinghuysen:—"Where can a free people look for a safer shield and defence than in this often abused and rejected Bible? It is a munition of rocks for the security of all our social and civil privileges. Let its influence go forth with the Divine blessing, and spread through the land in its purity and power, and all outrage and crime, oppression and tyranny, will retire before it."

Hon. Simon Greenleaf:—"The Bible is the only foundation on which our institutions can securely rest, whether political, social, or religious. Amid the fluctuations to which all free institutions are exposed, and especially ours, with a population, many of whom are unaccustomed to liberty, and but faintly imbued with Bible truths, the Word of God is the only anchor of safety."

Rev. Mark Hopkins, D.D.:—"We would, sir, have this blessed Book circulated and read every where: read in private, in families, in schools. We would have it read by every body: by the aged, by the middle-aged, and especially by the young; for just in proportion as we can bring its truths to bear upon *their* hearts, shall we lay the foundation of a reformation that will supersede the necessity of all others."

Hon. Hiram Ketchum:—"I verily believe that it is to the Bible that we are indebted for those institutions, and for the liberty we enjoy, more than to any other source whatever, and to all other sources whatever. And I doubt whether what we call republican liberty could exist here or elsewhere unless the people are instructed in the Bible."

Rev. Dr. Pierce, of Georgia:—"I am as well satisfied as of my own existence, that if our country is safe, if the Union is safe, if the people are safe, if the Church is safe, the Bible must have the chief hand in all of it."

Hon. B. F. Butler:—"All experience has shown, that human legislation can only reach a small part of the ills to which the individual members of every community are liable; and that unless the mass of the community are sufficiently instructed from the Oracles of God to be capable of self-government, the wisest of institutions will fail of their object and soon fall into decay."

Rev. H. D. V. Johns, D.D.:—"So long as we keep our hold upon the Volume of our faith, and trust to it as the one great ennobling principle of practice and of faith, so long will the life-blood flow clearly, and the pulsation beat high and strong through the heart of the American people."

Rev. Dr. Bethune:—"The spirit of our fathers has not fled; and so long as the Bible is kept among us—so long as it is made as free as the air—it will not depart. With this Bible in our hands, and its promises our inheritance, I will not fear for our country or the world."

John Thompson, Esq.:—"The liberal and enlightened principles of our civil polity are but the shoot and offspring of Christian revelation; they live by the sanction of heaven; and when God and His Word are excluded, every star in the galaxy of the Union pales and trembles."

Hon. Wm. H. Seward:—"The existing government of this country never

could have had an existence but for the Bible; and I believe, that if the Bible could always be found in every family in the land, our republican institutions would be perpetual."

Hon. A. Bruyn Hasbrouck:—"The Bible is the key stone which bends and sets the political arch, which we in these latter times have raised here, to stand as the world's model and the world's wonder; and the *pillared firmament* is no more upheld by the mighty hand that made it, than are our free institutions by the saving influences of the sacred Scriptures."

Stacey G. Potts, Esq.:—"The Pilgrims brought with them the Word of God. They incorporated its precepts and its language into their statute books, and thus laid the foundations of this mighty edifice: and we must not forget that the Bible is the *only safe foundation* on which civil liberty can rest."

Wm. W. Miller, Esq.:—"Oh! let the Bible have free course through your land, and it will pour upon its every section such a moral verdure and a moral radiance, as will extort from an admiring world the exclamation, 'Blessed is that nation whose God is the Lord!' Yes, distribute the Bible among all the habitations of freedom, and let every child in your land be taught to lisp its precepts, and you may dismiss your gloomy forebodings of evil days."

Chief Justice Hornblower:—"Let this precious Volume have its proper influence on the hearts of men, and our liberties are safe, our country blessed, and the world happy. There is not a tie that unites us to our families, not a virtue that endears us to our country, nor a hope that thrills your bosoms in the prospect of future happiness, that has not its foundation in this sacred Book. It is the charter of charters—the palladium of liberty—the standard of righteousness. Its divine influence can soften the heart of the tyrant—can break the rod of the oppressor, and exalt the humblest peasant to the dignified rank of an immortal being—an heir of eternal glory. Fellow citizens—friends of liberty! will you not rejoice, then, with me, in the triumphs of the Bible, and bless the day that gave to our country a society whose benevolent object is to extend the influence of the Scriptures throughout the world? *Shall we not bless the day which gave birth to the American Bible Society?*"

Constitution of an Auxiliary Bible Society.

ARTICLE 1. This Society shall be called the Bible Society of
Auxiliary to the American Bible Society.

ART. 2. The object of the Society shall be to promote the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, "without note or comment," and, in English, those of the commonly received version.

ART. 3. All persons contributing any sum to its funds shall be members for one year; those contributing one dollar or more shall receive (if called for within twelve months) a common Bible in return; those contributing *fifteen* dollars at *one* time, or *twenty* dollars at *two* payments, shall be members for life.

ART. 4. All funds not wanted for circulating the Scriptures within the Society's own limits, shall be paid over annually to the Parent Society, to aid distributions among the destitute in other parts of the country and in foreign lands.

ART. 5. The officers of the Society shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, whose duties shall be such as their respective titles import.

ART. 6. The management of the Society shall be intrusted to an Executive Committee of five, (or seven, including the Secretary and Treasurer,) which shall appoint its own Chairman, and make its own By-laws.

ART. 7. It shall be the duty of this Committee to meet frequently on adjournment, or on call of the Chairman; to keep a good supply of books on hand; to appoint local distributers; to see that collections, in some way, are made annually in every congregation; and that all funds are forwarded early to the Parent Society, with a statement as to the portion designed for the payment of books, and that as a free donation.

ART. 8. There shall be a general meeting of the Society on ———— of each year, when a full report of their doings shall be presented by the Committee, (a copy of which shall be furnished to the Parent Society,) and when a new election of Officers and Committee shall take place. Should the Society fail of an annual meeting, the same Officers and Committee shall be continued until an election does occur.

ART. 9. Any Branch Society, or Bible Committee, formed within the bounds of this Auxiliary, by paying over its funds annually, shall receive Bibles and Testaments at cost prices.

ART. 10. No alteration shall be made in this Constitution, except at an annual meeting, and by consent of two-thirds of the members present.

Branch Society.

In many parts of the country, counties are divided into separate townships, each of which, should it be deemed advisable, can form a small Branch Bible Society, in connection with the County Auxiliary. It can adopt a Constitution like the one above, with such alterations as the difference of circumstances will suggest. The Branch should collect its moneys annually, and pay them over to the County Auxiliary some weeks previous to its anniversary. All needed books can be procured through the Auxiliary, and kept in a convenient depository. Sometimes a single congregation can resolve itself into a Branch Bible Society, or appoint a Bible Committee of *three*, who shall collect and forward money, and receive books through the County Society.

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Important Notices.

PAYMENT, &c., FOR BIBLES AND TESTAMENTS.

Societies are requested to make payment to the General Agent and Assistant Treasurer, for Bibles purchased, as early as practicable; and, as moneys current in New York can generally be procured in distant parts on more favourable terms than bank-notes of those places can be parted with in that city, they are requested, when practicable, to have such notes exchanged for money or drafts at par here, or for certificates of deposit in banks of good repute, previous to remitting.

Societies, in making remittances, are *particularly requested* to mention what parts are intended for *books*, and what as *donations;* and in their orders for Bibles and Testaments, to specify the kinds wanted, by their size and *prices*, from the printed specimens and list, as exhibited on pages 10, 11, 12, and 13, of the Annual Report.

ANNUAL REPORTS.

Auxiliary Societies are requested to transmit to the Parent Society, by mail, as early as practicable after their Anniversaries, two copies of their Reports, if printed, or one in manuscript; and in their Reports, in addition to specifying the number of Bibles and Testaments distributed during the year, to mention the number issued since the formation of the Societies. They are also requested to give the names and *post-office* addresses of the President, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer of their respective Societies.

TRANSMISSION OF BIBLES.

It is requested that all Auxiliary and other Societies in the interior, whenever they order Bibles or ask for donations, will not fail to mention the name of some Agent *in a seaport*, previously secured, to whom the books may be sent. Attention to this is indispensable.

NEW AUXILIARY SOCIETIES.

No Society can be considered as having become Auxiliary until it shall have officially communicated to the Parent Society, *that its sole object is to promote the circulation of the Holy Scriptures without note or comment; and that it will place its surplus revenue, after supplying its own district with the Scriptures, at the disposal of the American Bible Society, as long as it shall remain thus connected with it.*

DONATIONS.

When Bibles or Testaments are wanted as donations for destitute families, or any other object, they should be solicited through an Auxiliary Bible Society. The Board are not in the practice of granting books to *individuals* directly, except in foreign countries. When Bibles are solicited as *donations*, the common plain bound kind only should be expected—those of a more expensive kind, if wanted, should be purchased.

FORM OF A BEQUEST TO THE SOCIETY.

I give and bequeath to the American Bible Society, formed in New York, in the year eighteen hundred and sixteen, the sum of , to be applied to the charitable uses and purposes of the said Society.

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